form in which Admiral Jellicoe put the question might make the seamen fear that they could never carry out properly the station-keeping and joint manoeuvring that membership of a convoy demanded, for he himself was firmly convinced that none but naval men could manage it. When this report was triumphantly presented to me, I was not told that the Shipping Controller had not been consulted as to either the names or the class of ship that ought to be represented at the gathering, and that officers of the smaller tramp were not deemed fit for so exalted a conclave.

In the spring of 1917 the losses amongst vessels sailing to Norway were again so serious that early in April a conference was summoned at Longhope to consider how to protect the Scandinavian trade. The naval officers at this conference were unanimously of opinion that instead of the loose and defective system of protected sailings hitherto adopted for these ships, they ought to be placed in regular convoy. Their report came to the senior officers, who were by no means so unanimous; but Admiral Beatty strongly supported them, and urged the extension of the convoy system to other shipping.

The Norwegian convoy

The report of the Longhope Conference was considered by the Admiralty on nth April, and they agreed as an exceptional measure to allow convoys

to be run experimentally for the time being in the Scandinavian trade. Between April and December, 1917, some 6,000 vessels were convoyed between Norway and the Humber, with a total loss of about 70 ships, or just over i per cent. In March and April I awaited the result of the French experiment and of the arming of merchantmen in increasing